



Boston Redevelopment Authority  
**Artist Live/Work Specific Design Guidelines**

1. Space Requirements:

- (i) A minimum of 1,000 square feet of live/work space for one artist is required.
- (ii) Work-only spaces must be at least 150 SF.
- (iii) Where separate live and work spaces are provided, the minimum combined area must be 1,000 SF.

2. Accessibility:

- (i) Studios and hallways should be of oversize width to accommodate the shipping of large works.
- (ii) Loading bays should be located directly adjacent to a direct route to elevators.
- (iii) Freight elevators should be provided to carry oversize/overweight objects; and allow for noise, weekend and late night deliveries.
- (iv) All space should be ADA adaptable and a reasonable number should be ADA accessible.

3. Security: Security should reflect the needs of artists who have on-site sales, employees and customers.

4. Fire Safety:

- (i) Fire protection systems should include the ability to address industrial accidents.
- (ii) Fire insulation should be adequate for open flames.
- (iii) Live-work space, particularly those where there are children living in the unit, should include an appropriate separation between live and work areas (such as a fire wall).
- (iv) Electrical capacity should meet the various needs of different art forms.

5. Lighting:

- (i) The window-to-room ratio needs to be adequate for natural light. The ideal source of light for workspace is from the north.
- (ii) Interior or “borrowed light” is especially important for deep spaces. Track lighting for studio photography/ dance/theater is preferred.

6. Noise: Wall and floor construction needs appropriate “sound transmission coefficient” to prevent the transmission of sound from machinery, equipment or repetitive tasks.
7. Indoor air quality:
  - (i) Special ventilation and air handling techniques should be tailored to ensure the safety and health of resident, visitors and neighbors.
  - (ii) All spaces need to provide venting via the outside wall while providing a central ventilation system to the roof.
8. Ceiling heights: Should allow for the creation of large works and large equipment, including machinery and lighting.
9. Floors:
  - (i) Should be constructed to provide extra weight-bearing capacity. It is not necessary that they be highly finished.
  - (ii) An upgrade package (sprung wood floors) for dance/theater performers should be included.
10. Minimum Fit-Out:
  - (i) The minimum level of fit-out that is required to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy Permit from the Inspectional Services Department and that meets artists’ needs for open and flexible space is desired.
  - (ii) Plumbing should include easy installation of slop sinks if needed.
  - (iii) Project should be fully wired for new technologies.
11. Dumpster Capacity: Oversize dumpster capacity should be provided.
12. Toxic and Hazardous Material Disposal: Containers should be provided for the disposal of toxic/hazardous materials (such as turpentine/paints).
13. Common Areas:
  - (i) Common space or meeting space may include display space for both art work and rehearsal.
  - (ii) On-site laundry should be provided.
  - (iii) Some artists will consider shared baths/kitchens if it reduces unit cost.
  - (iv) Access for outdoor work area should be provided to all tenants.